USDA NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
UPPER MIDWEST REGION - MINNESOTA FIELD OFFICE
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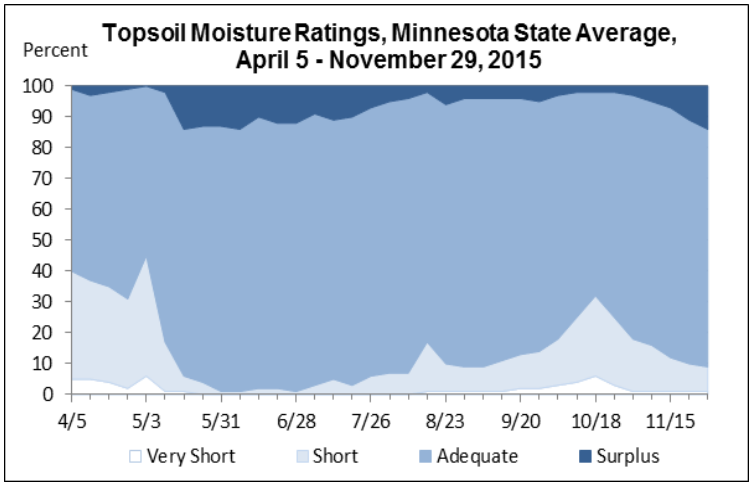
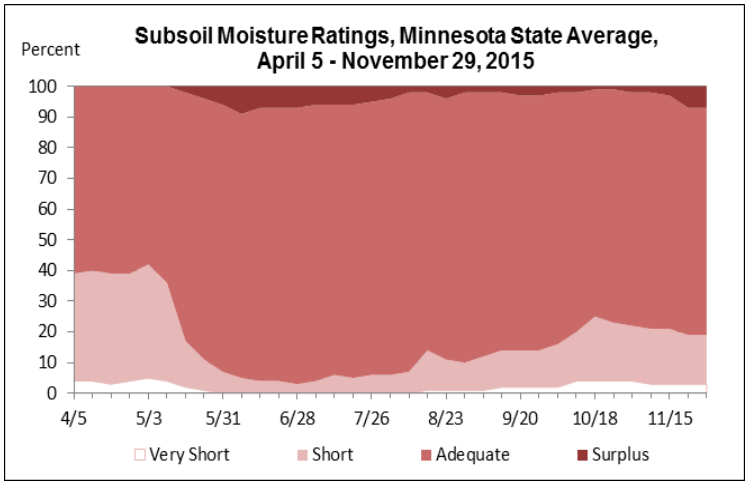
2015 MINNESOTA CROP PROGRESS REVIEW

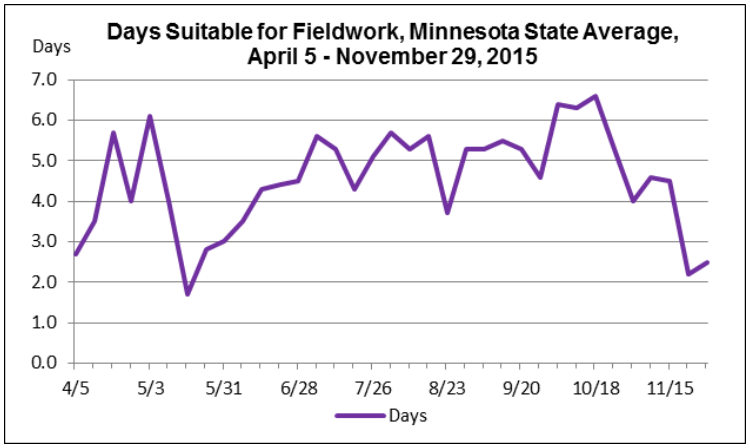
The Crop Progress and Condition Report is made possible by the dedication of our volunteer Crop Progress Reporters. Thanks for your help!

Review of the 2015 Crop Year:

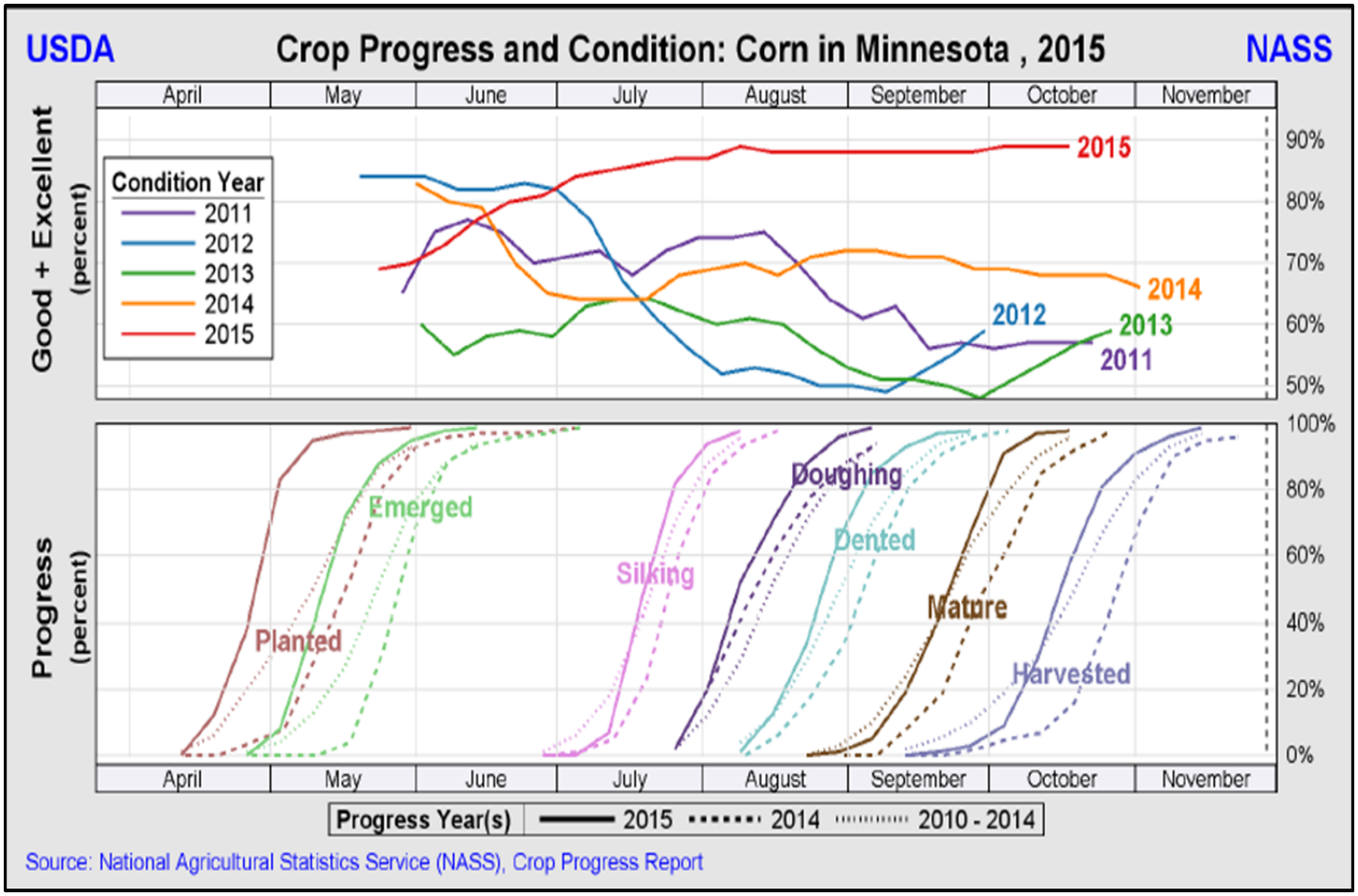
The 2015 crop season started off just slightly behind average, especially in the northern two-thirds of Minnesota where frost was still in the ground. Planting progress quickly surpassed the five-year average and was significantly ahead of last year. Statewide below normal precipitation throughout April caused soil moisture levels to decline slightly. The week ending May 3, had spring's highest days suitable at 6.1 days, allowing planting to advance rapidly. Most row crops were at or near their highest percentage planted in 30 years by May 10. Precipitation severely limited fieldwork the week ending May 17 with just 1.7 days suitable, the lowest the entire crop season. However, soil moisture levels and pasture condition improved significantly from the above average rainfall during the second half of the month. The week ending June 7 saw the highest topsoil and subsoil moisture levels with 14 and 9 percent surplus, respectively. Adequate moisture and near normal temperatures aided crop development during June and July. The week ending July 5 saw the best pasture and range condition with 80 percent rated in good to excellent condition. Small grain harvested started in late July and was nearly complete by the end of August, aided by warm temperatures and low rainfall until the last part of August. Row crop harvest began in the first part of September. Farmers were able to make significant harvest progress through September with about five days suitable for fieldwork each week and limited rainfall. The first three weeks in October recorded more than 6 days suitable for fieldwork each week with a season high of 6.6 days suitable the week ending October 18. During this time farmers made substantial harvest and fall fieldwork progress. Most of the state did not experience its first killing frost until mid-October. Toward the end of October and beginning of November scattered showers helped to recharge soil moistures. Farmers were able to virtually complete harvest and most fieldwork before the ground froze in the middle of November.





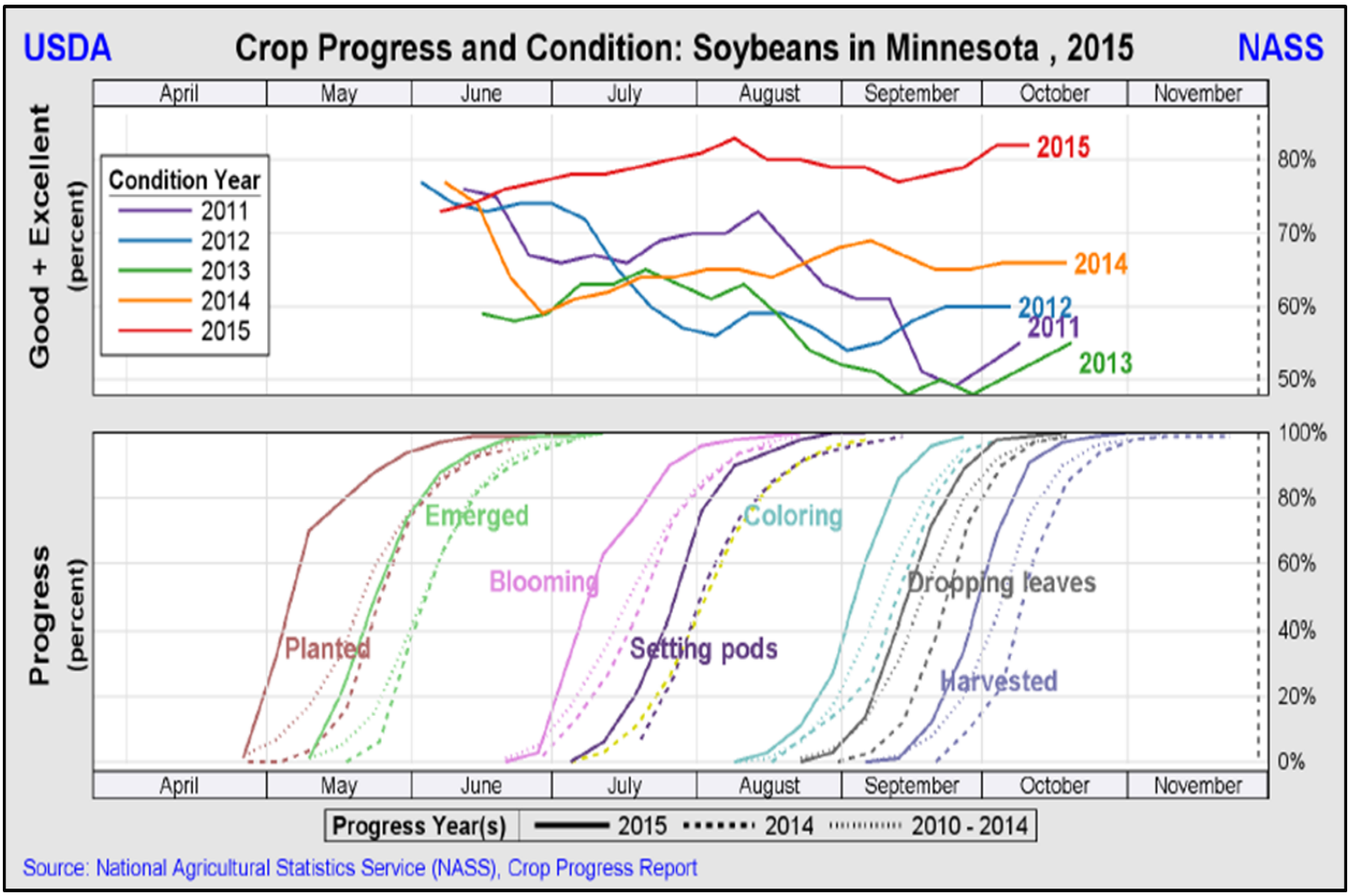


Corn planting started in the second week of April, with progress ahead of the previous year and the five-year average. Forty-five percent of the corn acreage was planted during the week ending May 3 to advance planting to 83 percent complete, 19 days ahead of average. Over 30 percent of the crop emerged in back-to-back weeks, during the weeks ending May 10 and May 17. Only 7 percent of the crop was in or beyond the silking stage as of July 12, 6 days behind average, but the next week added 40 percent of the crop into the silking stage to be just ahead of average. Corn harvested for silage was slow to start with only 5 percent harvested by August 30, over 1 week behind normal, but was virtually complete by October 11. The crop started to mature in late August at a slower than average pace but surpassed the average pace about halfway through the stage. Corn harvest for grain or seed began in the second half of September, about a week behind average. Condition improved during the entire season and ended at its highest ranking of 89 percent in good to excellent condition as of October 18. Harvest rapidly advanced after the first week of October to surpass average by mid-month. By November 15, 99 percent of the corn acreage was harvested, 1 week ahead of normal.



*Due to a lapse in federal funding in October 2013, the Crop Progress reports for the weeks ending October 6, 2013 and October 13, 2013 were cancelled. Therefore, previous year and five-year average estimates will reflect the years 2010-2014 using published estimates for 2010-2012 and 2014, and imputed estimates for 2013.

Soybean planting began in late April. The first 2 weeks of planting in earnest saw an increase of 31 and 38 percentage points for the weeks ending May 3 and May 10, respectively. Seventy percent of the crop was planted by May 10, the most planted by this date in over 50 years. Soybean emergence followed the same trend and was virtually complete by the end of June, a week ahead of average. Plants were starting to bloom by the end of June, slightly behind average, but quickly caught and surpassed the average by the first week in July. All plants were setting pods by the end of August, almost 2 weeks ahead of average. Leaves started to drop the last week of August. By September 19, 12 percent of the soybean crop was harvested, over 1 week ahead of last year, and 4 days ahead of average. Thirty-five percent of the acreage was harvested the week ending October 4 to advance harvest to 69 percent complete. Condition increased slowly during the season and ended with 82 percent in good to excellent condition. Harvest remained ahead of average the entire year. As of October 25, 99 percent of the soybean acreage was harvested, 1 week ahead of normal.



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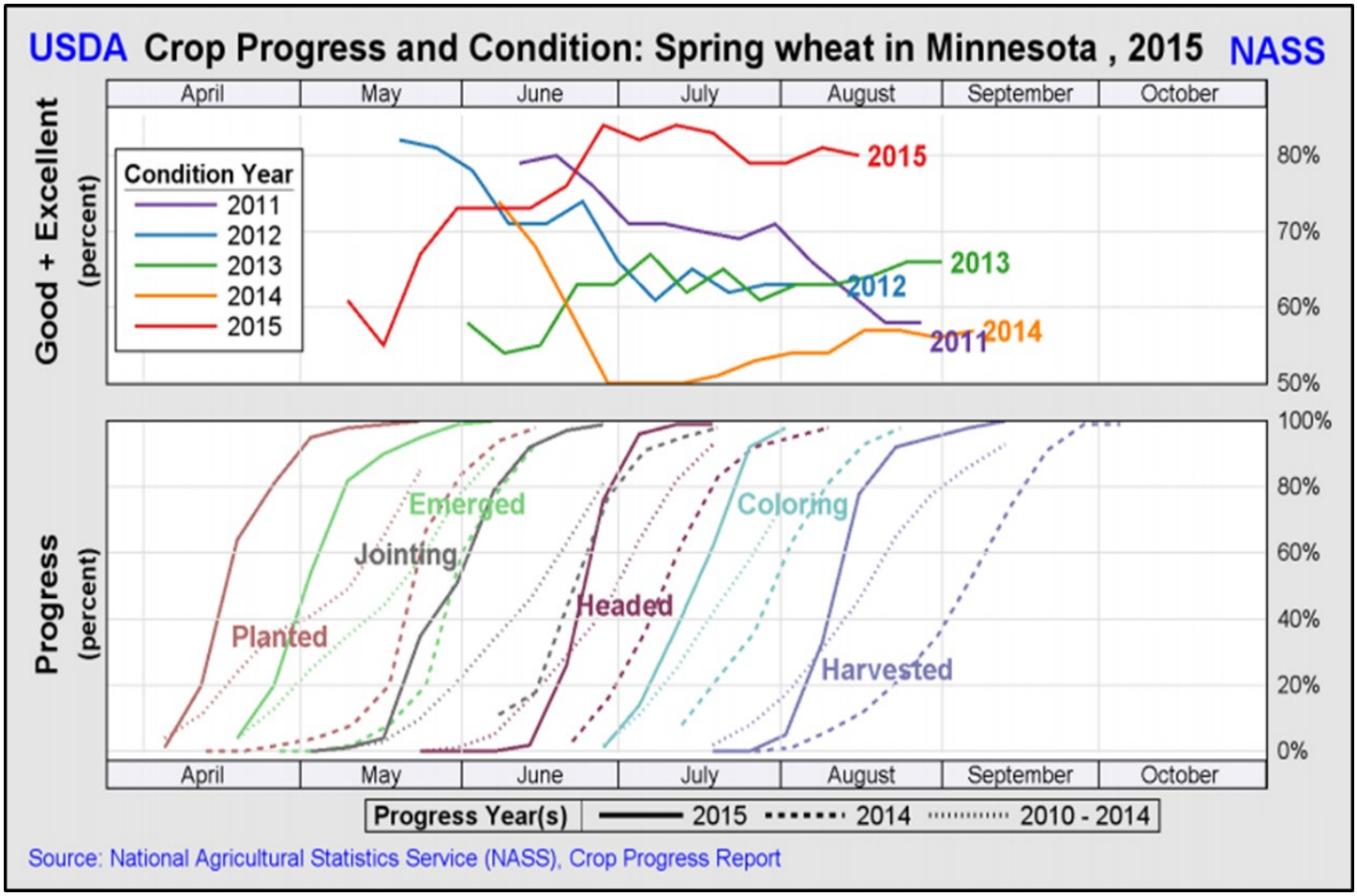
Spring Wheat seeding was just starting at the end of the first week of April. Seeding advanced by 44 percentage points the week ending April 19 to 64 percent seeded, 4 weeks ahead of the five-year average. Planting remained well ahead of average and was near completion by the middle of May. Spring wheat emerged was also ahead of normal and virtually complete by the end of May. One-half of the crop headed during the week ending June 28 advancing to 76 percent headed, 11 days ahead of average. Nearly all the acreage was in the heading stage or beyond by mid-July. The spring wheat acreage started turning color at the end of June. Almost all of the acreage had turned color or beyond by August 2, almost 3 weeks ahead of average. Spring wheat condition improved in June and then remained fairly consistent throughout the rest of the crop season. As of August 16, condition rated 80 percent good to excellent. Harvest started off behind the average in the beginning of August. Almost half of the spring wheat acreage was harvested during the week ending August 16. Harvest was complete by September 13, 2 weeks ahead of average.



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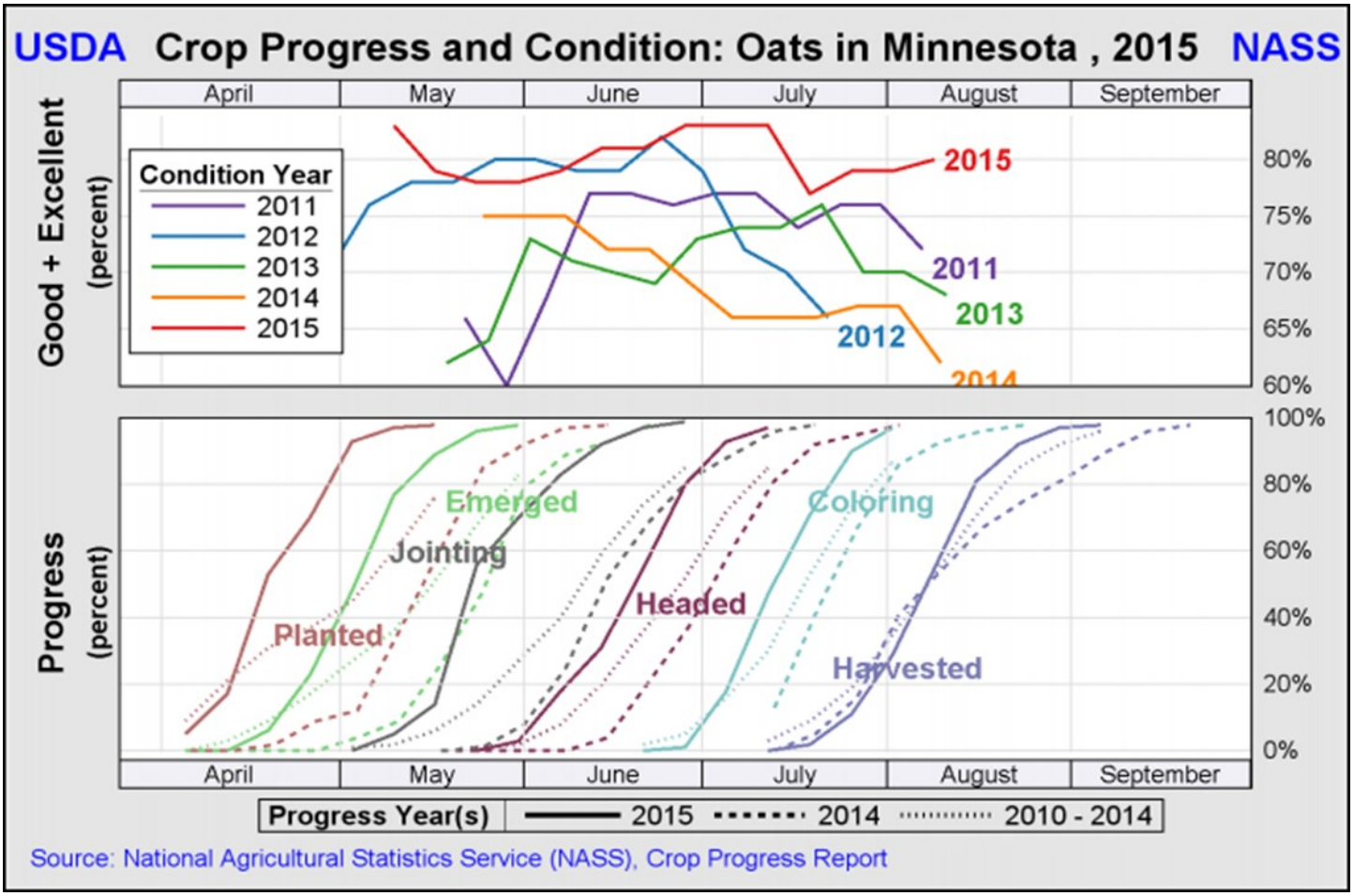
Oat seeding started off slowly, but surpassed the five-year average by over 2 weeks by the week ending April 19 during which over one-third of the crop was seeded. Seeding was nearing completion by the middle of May. Emergence started off slowly as well, but was almost 3 weeks ahead of normal by the end of May when nearly all the crop was emerged. The oat crop was starting to head in the last week of May and was ahead of average the entire stage. Oats were turning color in late June to early July. The amount of oats turning color was ahead of normal from early July through the end of the stage. Harvest began in mid-July, behind both last year's pace and the five-year average. Oat condition remained fairly steady throughout the crop season and was rated 80 percent good to excellent as of the week ending August 9. Over half of the oat acreage was harvested in the first two weeks of August, moving progress ahead of average. By September 6, harvest was 98 percent complete, 3 days ahead of average.



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The first cutting of **alfalfa hay** started in the second half of May and was 12 percent complete by May 31, one week behind the five-year average. Progress trailed behind average until June 21, when three-quarters of the acreage had been cut for the first time. The second cutting of alfalfa hay started in earnest in the beginning of July, ahead of last year's progress. By August 9, the second cutting was 97 percent complete, 3 weeks ahead of last year. By the last week in July some farmers had started to harvest their third crop of alfalfa hay, ahead of the previous year. As of August 16, all hay condition rated 78 percent good to excellent. The third cutting of alfalfa hay was 98 percent complete as of September 27, almost 3 weeks ahead of last year.

Barley seeding started in early April at a normal pace but advanced quickly to be ahead of the five-year average by almost three weeks in the second half of the month. Seeding was nearly complete by the end of the first week of May. Emergence followed the same pattern as planting and was well ahead of the average with almost all of the crop emerged by the end of May. The percent of the crop headed started off behind average but by June 21, the crop was 32 percent headed, 1 day ahead of average. Harvest began in late July, slightly behind the average pace. Harvest quickly surpassed the average pace when almost half of the crop was harvested during the week ending August 9. Condition steadily improved throughout the season and was last rated 64 percent good to excellent as of August 16. By September 6, harvest was 98 percent complete, 8 days ahead of average.

Dry Edible Bean planting started in late April to early May, ahead of the five-year average. By May 10, 35 percent of the crop was planted, the most planted by this date in over 30 years. Planting progress remained ahead of average the entire stage and was virtually complete by mid-June. Most of the dry edible bean crop bloomed during July and started to set pods during the second half of the month. At the end of August almost half the crop was dropping leaves and harvest had just begun. Crop condition improved from the beginning of the year and peaked on August 16 when 18 percent of the crop was rated in excellent condition. Harvest was ahead of average throughout the year. As of September 20, condition was last rated at 70 percent good to excellent. By October 4, harvest was 98 percent complete, 18 days ahead of average.

Sugarbeet planting started in early April, with 11 percent planted by April 12, 1 week ahead of the five-year average. Over one-half of the acreage was planted during the week ending April 19 to put planting progress ahead of the average by almost 4 weeks. Planting was complete by the middle of May. Condition rated 79 percent good to excellent as of June 7. Sugarbeet condition improved during June and July. Harvest started in mid-August, ahead of average. Harvest accelerated during the week ending October 4, when 35 percent of the crop was lifted. The last condition rating of the year on October 4, had 85 percent of the crop in good to excellent condition, with over half in excellent condition. Over one-third of the acreage was lifted during the week ending October 11, moving harvest to 88 percent complete. Harvest was complete by October 25, 2 weeks ahead of average.

Sunflower planting began in late April to early May. One-third of the acreage was planted in the week ending May 10, advancing planting progress to 48 percent complete, over 2 weeks ahead of the five-year average. Planting progress remained ahead of average, with planting virtually complete by June 28. As of June 14, 44 percent of the sunflower crop was in good to excellent condition. Conditions steadily improved until August 16 when conditions topped out at 64 percent good to excellent. Harvest began in late September. Harvest progress more than doubled from the week ending October 4 to October 11 with 56 percent complete, 9 days ahead of average. The last condition rating as of October 11 estimated 57 percent of the crop in good to excellent condition. As of November 1, 99 percent of the sunflower acreage was harvested, over 3 weeks ahead of average.

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